REMARKS

This preliminary amendment is submitted with a request for continued examination. Claims 1-11, 15, and 21-27 are pending. Claims 12-14 and 16-20 are canceled. The Office Action rejects Claims 1-11, 15, and 21-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,963,928 to Bagley et al. ("Bagley") in view of U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2003/0007482 to Khello et al. ("Khello").

Applicants have made clarifying amendments to independent Claims 9, 11 and 15 to more particularly and distinctly claim the invention. These amendments are fully supported by the originally filed specification. In light of the amendments and subsequent remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance.

The Rejection of Independent Claims 1, 9, 11, and 15 under §103(a) is Overcome

The Office Action alleges that independent Claims 1, 9, 11, and 15 ("the independent claims") are unpatentable over the combination of Bagley and Khello. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and submit that the independent claims are patentably distinct from the cited references, taken alone or in combination.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to a method comprising receiving data to be supplied to database operations in a domain name server. The data includes at least one Internet domain name comprising a plurality of successive labels separated by dots. The at least one Internet domain name is in a format and comprises at least one hostname and at least one top-level domain name. The method further comprises conditionally converting at least one of the at least one Internet domain name into a second format of Internet domain name in which at least two successive labels of the at least one of the at least one Internet domain name are combined to form a single label. The conditionally converting comprises converting the Internet domain name when the Internet domain name fulfills a predetermined condition. The method additionally comprises supplying the data to the database operations. The supplied data includes at least one Internet domain name in the second format.

Independent Claims 9, 11, and 15 are directed to a system, apparatus, and apparatus, respectively, and, though each has its own respective scope, include substantially similar recitations as Claim 1 insofar as this discussion is concerned. In this regard, each of the independent claims recite "conditionally converting at least one of said at least one Internet domain name into a second format of Internet domain name in which <u>at least two successive labels of the at least one of said at least one Internet domain name are combined to form a single label</u>." The Office Action submits that Col. 8, lines 37-59 of Bagley teaches this feature. However, neither the cited portion of Bagley nor any other portion of Bagley teaches or suggests combining successive labels to form a single label. In this regard, even broadly interpreting the disclosure of Bagley as applied in the Office Action, Bagley at most suggests removing a label (Col. 8, lines 29-31) and scrambling a single label (1800JKL1234). Nowhere does Bagley teach or suggest <u>combining</u> at least two successive labels to form a single label. Neither Khello nor any other cited reference, taken alone or in combination, cures the deficiencies of Bagley.

Accordingly, the independent claims are patentably distinct from the cited references, taken alone or in combination, such that the rejection of the independent claims is overcome. Applicants further respectfully submit that the independent claims are in condition for allowance.

<u>The Rejection of the Dependent Claims is Overcome</u>

Because each of the dependent claims includes each of the recitations of a respective independent base claim, Applicants further submit that the dependent claims are patentably distinguishable from the cited references, taken alone or in combination, for at least those reasons discussed above. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of the dependent claims are overcome and the dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amended claims and remarks presented above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the present claims of the present application are in condition for immediate allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,

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ELECTRONICALLY FILED USING THE EFS-WEB ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT &
TRADEMARK OFFICE ON February 25, 2010.